Mr. M. Bhuthalingam Pillai (*Eraniel*) represented that it was desirable to give some political education to the people, especially in view of the fact that they had to elect representatives for the Sri Mulam Popular Asssembly and give detailed instructions to them as to their wants and grievances, and that nothing could accomplish this object better than the establishment of free reading rooms in the four chief towns of the four Divisions.

Reply.—Government cannot undertake to establish free reading rooms in the headquarters of divisions. Private enterprise should be left to do the needful.

171. Necessity for setting apart an hour in Catholic schools to teach holy books to Christian students.

Mr. Warkey John (*Travancore and Cochin Roman Catholic Association, Kottayam*) said that it was desirable to set apart one hour every day for teaching the Bible in Catholic schools and requested that Government might accord sanction to the same.

Reply.—The managers of schools are at perfect liberty to do this, if they like, at any time outside the prescribed school hours.

172. Admission of pupils of all castes in Government schools.

Mr. G. Idichandy B. A., Bar-at-Law (*Mavelikara*) said that it was highly desirable that all Government schools should be thrown open without reservation to all castes and classes of His Highness the Maha Rajah's subjects and that those people who were not willing to send their children to such schools should be rather left to establish schools of their own. It might be said that the time was now premature for bringing about such a reform, but if Government were to wait for the adoption of any rule or measure until the majority of the subjects called for it, very few reforms could be effected at all, in view of the conservative spirit of the people of the State. Government should therefore do what they considered just and proper, making equality the cardinal principle of administration.

Mr. M. Govindan, B. A., B. L., (*Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalanayogam, Trivandrum*) spoke on the exclusion of Ealavas from many of the Government schools of the State. He presented a memorial signed by eleven members of the Assembly pointing out that in several Government schools the children of the Ealava community, one of the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

most important sections of His Highness' the Maha Rajah's subjects, alike in number and in point of payment of tax to Government, were refused admission and this unjust exclusion was incompatible with the present progressive and liberal administration of the State. The member said that, in most of the Government Vernacular Girls' schools, Ealava girls were totally denied admission and, into the majority of Vernacular schools for boys also, the boys of that community were not admitted. Again, the doors of the Sanskrit College and the Ayurvedic Patasala were absolutely closed against them. All the above schools were established and maintained at the expense of the State for the education of His Highness the Maha Rajah's subjects. When their children therefore sought admission in these schools, they were not doing anything more than claiming a privilege to which, it must be admitted, they were in all fairness entitled. Giving elementary education to all classes of subjects was recognised as an important duty by all civilised Governments. In consideration of the backward educational condition of certain classes, the expense of their primary education was being at present met wholly by Government. The Ealavas did neither come in, nor apply, for any favourable treatment under these rules. All that they now claimed was admission for their boys and girls into all Government schools. It could not be said that the majority of Government schools in the State were intended only to be caste schools reserved for the education of particular classes of His Highness' subjects. He begged to submit that what was known as the separate school system was a luxury which the particular classes that might stand in need of it ought to pay for exclusively, and that Government schools maintained from public funds towards which all classes contributed equally should, in justice, be thrown open to all, without distinction of caste or creed. In regard to the Ayurvedic Patasala, the Ealavas had a special grievance. They had been from time immemorial noted for their proficiency in the native medical art, but owing to the want of the sympathy of Government for their aspirations in this direction, they were being gradually ousted even from their most favourite profession. They were denied admission to the only school in the State which was recognised by Government as the proper training ground for native physicians, and the result was that at present only very few Ealava physicians obtained grants-in-aid from Government. He feared that,

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

at this rate, if Government did not afford the requisite relief prayed for, the useful class of hereditary Ealava physicians would be nowhere in the course of the next three or four decades. The member closed with a prayer that due consideration might be given to all the above representations, and such orders passed as might be calculated to remove all the educational disabilities of the Ealavas. (The memorial is published as Appendix C to the Proceedings.)

Mr. N. Govinda Pillai (*Kunnattur*) suggested that the treatment of snake-bite might be taught as one of the subjects in the Ayurvedic Patasala and that those who passed out in this subject might be given special grants-in-aid. He also pleaded for the admission of Ealava boys into this Patasala.

Reply.—Under the present conditions, it is not possible to admit Ealava boys into all Government schools. Admission is practically free to all castes in Government English schools. Admission to Vernacular middle schools is also free, except where they are situated in close proximity to temples or palaces. The unrestricted admission of Ealava pupils into caste girls' schools is also not feasible now. Wherever there is a sufficient number of pupils to constitute a separate school, the question of opening the same will be thought of. Ealavas cannot at present be admitted into the Ayurvedic school on account of its situation. As regards the opening of a class for the study of snake-bite cure, the matter will be referred to the Superintendent of native Vaidyasalas.

173. Promotion of the education of backward classes.

Mr. V. Sankaranarayana Iyer, B. A., B. L., (*Agastiswaram*) pointed out that many of the schools for the education of backward classes, such as the pulayas and the pariahs, were maintained by private agencies and only aided by Government. This arrangement did not work well and he prayed that more schools for imparting instruction to them might be started under direct Government management.

Mr. T. Marthandan Tampi, B. A., (*Trivandrum*) said that he wished to advocate the cause of a community who sent no representatives to the Popular Assembly, *viz.*, the Pulayas. They were inferior to the Ealavas in social status and were labouring under diverse disabilities. The only remedy was to give them education. Free primary edu-

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